



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 18, 2003

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## **MI Senate To Examine Causes of Electrical Blackout Across Michigan, Eastern U.S.**

*Sen. Patterson to investigate recent power outages and what safeguards are needed to prevent future occurrences*

LANSING – The Michigan Senate is set to examine how a power failure in Ohio last week caused a the largest blackout in U.S. history and left more than 1.2 million Michigan customers without electricity, Senate Majority Leader Ken Sikkema said today.

Sikkema, R-Wyoming, has asked Sen. Bruce Patterson, R-Canton, to convene the Senate Technology and Energy Committee and ask industry executives and regulators why Michigan's power grid failed and what can be done to prevent future occurrences.

"The people who endured the blackout have many questions about what happened and why," Sikkema said. "Senator Patterson's committee offers us an excellent opportunity to ask some of questions many Michigan residents have."

The committee will hold its hearing at 10 a.m., Wednesday, Aug. 20 in room 210 of the Farnum Building, Lansing. Officials from DTE Energy and Consumers Energy along with Michigan Public Service Commissioners are expected to testify, Patterson said.

"By hearing directly from power company officials and regulators, hopefully, we can begin to understand that factors that caused the blackout and how we can avoid it in the future," Patterson said. "This hearing is not intended to assess blame. We just want to know what happened and why."

Patterson said he intends to hold additional hearings to examine the effects the power outage had on Michigan telecommunications and fresh water infrastructure. The committee

hearing is open to the public and will be broadcast on Michigan Government Television which is available on many local cable systems.

-- 30 --